REMARKS

This amendment, submitted in response to the Office Action dated June 19, 2003, is

believed to be fully responsive to each point of objection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable

reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35

U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi (USP 6,275,825) in view of Jacobs et al.

(USP 5,694,595). Applicant submits the following in traversal of the rejection.

Kobayashi pertains to a database linking system. Column 11, lines 66-67. In the past, it

was often difficult to group the databases to which a user has access. In particular, identifying

the databases to which a user had access was time consuming and required extensive operator

knowledge. See Background of the Invention. Kobayashi attempts to solve the problem by

grouping users and the information which they can access. Instead of individually identifying

the databases a user can access, multiple users are grouped together, based on their employment

position. Since employees in similar positions often have access to the same information, they

will be given access to the same databases. See Abstract.

When a user logs into a system, the system initializes all of the databases and the system

determines what files the user is allowed to access. See Fig. 8 and accompanying text. The

"login ID" entered by the user is converted by the system into a "user ID" which acts as a

retrieval key. The system organizes the databases which are accessible by the user based on the

retrieval key. By converting the login ID into a retrieval key, the system can more efficiently

obtain the databases to which a user has access. Column 8, lines 26-35. Once the databases are

set, the system then verifies whether the user password is correct. If the password is correct, then

the user is allowed to access the databases that were just initialized. Column 10, lines 16-35.

The user is then allowed to view employee information. See Fig. 19.

The present invention pertains to requests made by a user to obtain information over a

network. When a user makes a request for information, they are issued a reservation number

which will later be used to obtain their request. Information desired by the user is not often

immediately available, and in an embodiment of the present invention, instead of requiring the

user to remain connected to the network while the desired information is being retrieved, the user

is issued a reservation number and is allowed to terminate their connection to the network. At a

later time, the user can then again establish a connection to the network and access the system.

At that time, the requested information will then be available without the user having to wait the

full retrieval time. The user need only enter the reservation number which is associated with the

previous request and they may retrieve the desired information.

Based upon these brief descriptions of Kobayashi and the present invention, it is clear

that Kobayashi does not teach the elements of the present invention, as further explained below.

Claims 1 and 4

The Examiner maintains Kobayashi teaches setting up processing conditions for retrieval

processing in accordance with a retrieval request and issuing a reservation number of the

retrieval processing and informing the user of the reservation number. The Examiner further

maintains that Kobayashi discloses applying the reservation number to the processing conditions

and registering the reservation number with a predetermined retrieval management table, citing

column 10, lines 16-24 in support.

The respective column and lines cited by the Examiner describe retrieving a user DB

access right file (UAF) when a user inputs a login name. The input login name is converted into

the login name of the employee information file DB and access to files in the database is

determined.

The respective column and lines cited by the Examiner do not describe issuing a

reservation number of the retrieval processing and informing the user of the reservation number.

It appears the Examiner is indicating that the converted login name is an issued reservation

number. However, at no point is the user of Kobayashi informed of the converted login name.

The user login is converted to ease system control of information and is used to determine what

information is accessible by a user. Therefore, the converted login name is for internal system

use. For example, when a user inputs a login name of "tuzaki" the login name is converted to

"A-1" which represents that the user belongs to the user group "Department Manager" and the

corresponding files available for a Department Manager to view, are obtained. Column 10, lines

20-21, Fig. 3A2. There is no indication at any point in the reference, and there is no reason why

a user would be informed that their converted login name is A-1.

The Examiner also maintains Kobayashi discloses registering the reservation number

with a predetermined retrieval management table. Kobayashi does not disclose registering the

converted login name with a predetermined retrieval management table.

The Examiner further maintains Kobayashi teaches retrieval result providing means for

retrieving a retrieval result associated with a reservation number from among the retrieval results

stored in the retrieval result storage file when an inquiry concerning the retrieval result is made

from a user based on the reservation number and providing the retrieval result for the user.

Retrieval of results can be performed on a basis other than by reservation number, such as by a

sequential output of search information. Since retrieval can be provided by means other than a

reservation number this feature is not inherent or suggested by Kobayashi.

Even if a user inquires about a retrieval result, at no point does the user make an inquiry

on the retrieval result with the reservation number. The reservation number, as previously

argued by the Examiner, is the login ID entered by the user which is later converted for system

use to a user ID. At no point is the user aware of the converted ID and at no point does the user

use the converted the ID to obtain access to the system.

The Examiner concedes Kobayashi does not disclose access through a communication

network, contents retrieval means for retrieving the contents on the communication network in

accordance with the processing conditions registered with the retrieval management table and

storing the retrieval result together with the reservation number, in a predetermined retrieval

result storage file and cites Jacobs to cure the deficiency.

Jacobs pertains to a system for administering user profiles on remote machines in a

database environment. Column 1, lines 9-12. Instead of requiring an administrator to physically

travel to each machine in a network in order to modify a user ID and password, an administrator

can remotely modify the user profile information. Column 2, lines 1-7.

The Examiner maintains Jacobs implicitly indicates authorization checking by means of a

logon facility and administration of user ID's and passwords. The Examiner maintains this

aspect of Jacobs discloses receiving a retrieval request of contents on a communication network

from a user accessing through the communication network and contents retrieval means for

retrieving the contents on the communication network and storing the retrieval result with the

reservation number in a predetermined retrieval storage file, citing column 4, lines 41-51 in support.

The respective column and lines cited by the Examiner disclose a UPM security system which requires a logon ID and password before a user can access a system. A UPM is used to define a user logon profile which store information enabling user's logon to remote systems. To the best of our interpretation, it appears that the Examiner is referring to a user logon profile for teaching contents on a communication network registered with a retrieval management table. However, there would be absolutely no reason why the user logon profile (containing a user ID and password) would be stored with the reservation number (converted user ID of Kobayashi) in a predetermined retrieval storage file. In particular, it is unclear why based on a user ID (reservation number of Kobayashi), a user would request a user ID (retrieval result of Jacobs). This clearly does not make sense and the Examiner's reasoning is merely a result of hindsight.

For the above reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims should be deemed patentable. Since claim 4 describes similar subject matter, it is patentable for the same reasons.

Claim 2

The Examiner maintains Kobayashi teaches a retrieval request receiving means which sets up whether there is a need to display retrieval results in the form of a thumb-nail, as described in claim 2, and cites column 4, lines 26-30 in support.

As a preliminary matter, it is rather inconsistent that the Examiner initially maintained that Kobayashi lacks a contents retrieval means as described in claim 1 and now cites Kobayashi for teaching the contents retrieval means of claim 2. Regardless, neither Kobayashi nor Jacobs discloses the elements of claim 2.

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The respective column and lines of Kobayashi cited by the Examiner describe an access

right setting table form to be displayed and output in setting/changing an access right of the

employee information file DB in accordance with a user attribute in units of user groups. The

access information does not relate to display of a retrieval result. It is unclear where thumb-nail

images, let alone displaying retrieving results in the form of a thumb-nail is at all disclosed in the

column and lines cited by the Examiner.

Assuming *arguendo*, the Examiner meant to cite Jacobs for teaching that the contents

retrieval means of claim 2, there is absolutely no indication throughout the reference that thumb-

nail images are created, let alone an image storage file for storing the thumb-nail images.

Therefore, claim 2 should be deemed patentable.

Claim 3

The Examiner maintains Kobayashi in combination with Jacobs teaches the elements of

claim 3. Claim 3 describes that the retrieval request receiving means sets up as to whether there

is a need to inform a user by electronic mail that a retrieval result is obtained. There is

absolutely no indication throughout either Kobayashi or Jacobs that electronic mail is sent to a

user.

The Examiner reasons that since Kobayashi discloses file sharing, distributed

applications and databases and other services, that it also discloses informing a user through

electronic mail. There is absolutely no indication in Jacobs that a user is informed of a result of a

request through electronic mail. The Examiner is making assumptions about a reference, when

there is no evidence that the reference discloses such elements. Therefore, claim 3 should be

deemed patentable.
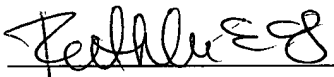
Applicant has added claims 5-15 to provide a more varied scope of protection for the present invention.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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